

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2009

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Your news reader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria, with relays on 28,325, 14,235, 10,130, 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB, as well as 52,750, 438,825 and 1 296 MHz FM in the Pretoria area. (Other newsreaders please change to suit).

In the news today:

THE FIRST 4 METRE EME CONTACT CLAIMED

SUMBANDILASAT FEATURED ON INTECNET THIS EVENING

MEMBERSHIP BREAKS THE 1 400 MARK

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY FOCUSES ON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more detail on these, and other important and interesting news items.

THE FIRST 4 METRE EME CONTACT CLAIMED

Andy Kissack, GD0TEP, on the Isle of Man believes that his EME contact with Willem Badenhorst, ZS6WAB, on 4 metres could prove to be a first. Newsline reports that it could be a world record on the 4 metre band.

Andy says on his website that following tests done by himself and GD4GNH back in 2006, he finally found a suitable station to try for an EME contact on the 4 metre band. As a result, Andy and Willem in South Africa tried an EME contact on Friday evening, 13 February. Unfortunately, his mast-mounted transmit-and-receive relay failed, due to water vapour ingress.

Their second attempt was on the morning of 15 February. Visibility of the moon from Andy's location came at 00:38 UTC and at 01:34, he received his first moon bounce echo. About a minute later, Andy and Willem, ZS6WAB, completed what both operators believe to be the world's first 4 metre EME contact using low-noise JT65, a digital mode. Screen shots of the QSO are available online at www.gd0tep.com.

JT65 is a digital protocol intended for Amateur Radio communication with extremely weak signals. It was designed to optimize Earth-Moon-Earth (EME)

contacts on the VHF frequencies and conforms efficiently to the recognized standards and procedures for such QSOs. JT65 includes error-correcting features that make it very robust, even with signals much too weak to be heard.

SUMBANDILASAT FEATURES ON INTECNET TONIGHT

Tonight, Sunday 22 February, commencing at 19:30, the subject for discussion on Intecnet will be SumbandilaSat and its amateur radio payload. Join the designers and builders for an update of what you can expect after launch, which is scheduled for 25 March 2009. Dr Gert-Jan van Rooyen will discuss the SDR transponders and how it is integrated with the amateur payload. A number of slides are available for download from the ARMI pages on www.sarl.org.za click on 'Publications' and select 'ARMi'.

SA AMSAT President Dave Long, ZS5FR, will participate in the discussion and is keen to get your input of what the next project should include.

MEMBERSHIP EXCEEDS THE 1 400-MARK

This week the SARL membership topped the 1 400-mark and is on its way to the next target of 1 450. If you have not yet taken the important step of joining the SARL and support the development and future of Amateur Radio do it now. Visit www.sarl.org.za and click on 'Membership' for details. The increase in membership shows an 8,1% growth over last year.

This week we welcome the following new members and wish them a long association with the SARL to our mutual benefit:

Simon Cammies, G3VNI; B.E. Johnson, ZR1BEJ; Fred Ziss, ZR1FZ; David E Pieterse, ZR1DEP; Rory Bruins, ZR1RBR; Paul Johnson, ZS1BR; John Green, ZS1GOM; Okko de Jameer, ZS1OKO; Owen Penberthy, ZS1JN; Mathias Tolken, ZU1MT; Angela Tolken, ZU1YZ; Karel Reyneke, ZU3K; Albie Gibson, ZS4AZ; André de Jong, ZR5AKQ; Timothy Schoeman, ZR5TIM; Reginald Llewellyn, ZS5REG; Hennie Stander, ZR6STI, and Doryn L Jolly, ZR6JO

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY FOCUSES ON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

The IARU is designating this year's world amateur radio day on 18 April to emergency communication. The day falls on a Saturday, which makes it ideal to show the public of South Africa what amateur radio is all about, and focuses on community service that radio amateurs offer the public. Listen to the Hamnet report on Amateur Radio Mirror International later this morning or visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'activities' and select 'HAMNET' for an audio recording or hard copy.

PIC COURSE PARTICIPANTS CAN WIN A MICROCHIP DEBUGGER

If you have booked and participated in any one of the SARL's PIC Courses, you are invited to take part in a competition in which one lucky person will win a limited-edition 'Microchip debugger'. For full details on how to participate,

visit the RTA pages on www.sarl.org.za. The closing date for entries is 20 March 2009. Only amateurs who attended a SARL PIC course are eligible to enter. Follow the instructions on the website carefully.

IARU REGION 1 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee of IARU Region 1 will hold their first meeting from Friday 27 February to Monday 2 March 2009 at a hotel at Heathrow Airport in London. Apart from the various reports to be dealt with, the EC will look at a strategy plan for the Region for the next three years.

CONTEST NEWS

On next Sunday, 1 March, the popular SARL Hamnet 40 metre Simulated Emergency Contest will take place 14:00 to 16:00 CAT. This is a phone-only contest. The exchange is a RS report followed by a serial number, which is determined by the category of participation. Set up a field station or go mobile and take part in the contest. Please consult the 2009 SARL Contest Manual for the complete rules.

The first leg of the SARL VHF/UHF Contest will be on the weekend of 21 and 22 March 2009.

The closing date for the HF Field Day logs is midnight on Monday 2 March. The logs can be sent by e-mail to hfcontests@netactive.co.za or by snail mail to Box 12104, Brandhof, 9324. Please read paragraph 4 and 5 of the General Rules before submitting your logs.

PROPAGATION REPORT

The effective sun spot number for the coming week will be less than 5. 15 and 20 m will provide the best opportunities for DX. There is a possibility of 15 m openings towards India from about 14:00 CAT followed by 20 m at 18:00 and 20 m at 18:00. Contacts with New Zealand will be very challenging.

20 m contacts may be possible with Australia at 08:00. Contacts with Peru are highly unlikely. Brazil may be worked on 15 and 20 m from 14:00 and 19:00 respectively. At 16:00 there may be short, weak 15 m openings followed by weak, short 20 m openings at 18:00 towards Europe.

Contacts with the USA s East Coast are possible on 15 m from 18:00 followed by 20 m openings from 22:00. 10 MHz looks promising in the late afternoon and after dark for the CW and digital enthusiasts.

Local conditions are going to be good on 40 m during daytime. 80 m may perform well during the early mornings and late afternoons over the shorter distances, e.g. between ZS5 and ZS6. 30 m may perform well during the middle of the day between ZS6 and ZS1. Even 20 m may perform well over the longer distances before morning teatime. 80 m is the frequency of choice in the evenings. With summer still here, the thunderstorms and static discharges may cause conditions to be challenging.

Remember that this is only a prediction and that HF can surprise you, but you will never know unless you switch your rig on, listen and also call CQ.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

1 March SARL Hamnet 40 metre Simulated Emergency Contest; 2 March Closing date for submission of Field Day logs; 7 March PARC Mega Flea market; 14 and 15 March RSGB Commonwealth Contest; 20 March Closing date for submission of PIC debugger claims; 21 March BACAR launch; 21 and 22 March SARL VHF/UHF Contest; 18 April World Amateur Radio Day, and 24 - 26 April SARL National Convention, Cape Town.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to the programme Amateur Radio Mirror International every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 860 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO which can be listened to. For the webstream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'ARMI' and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by Dennis, ZS4BS, and edited by Jannie, ZR6PHD.

Thank you for listening, 73.